



The Insider

www.senate.mi.gov/switalski

Inside State Politics with State Senator Mickey Switalski Senate District 10

October 15, 2004

Welcome to the electronic version of *The Insider*. I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for your support and for giving me an opportunity to represent you in the Michigan Senate. It is my sincere hope that this bi-weekly e-newsletter will keep you informed of the happenings in Lansing while staying true to the traditional style of *The Insider*. If you would like to contact me, please feel free to e-mail me at senmswitalski@senate.michigan.gov or call me at my Roseville or Lansing office. You can also meet me in person during my constituent hours, coming to a library near you. Call my office and make an appointment or just walk in. See schedule for details.

Information on 2004 Election Proposals

On November 2nd, you will have an opportunity to play an important role in the shaping of our nation and our state's future. November 2nd symbolizes an opportunity for Americans to exercise the highest measure of democracy, the right to cast a vote to elect their officials. Yet so many Americans do not exercise this right.

You will be faced with many choices. Not only will you get a chance to cast a vote for a presidential candidate, but you will also vote for numerous state, federal and local positions. Lastly, you will have an opportunity to vote on two statewide ballot proposals. In order to exercise your right to vote in our democracy effectively, it is important to be as informed as possible.

The Michigan Voter Information Center (<http://www.sospublius.org>) may help. The site offers voters a chance to preview a sample ballot from their precinct and also provides a map to the polling location and instructions on how to use the voting system in that precinct. The website also provides available informational links to a candidate's biographical information, website, and campaign finance reports.

Many constituents have contacted me regarding the two statewide ballot proposals. They have been exposed to numerous radio and television advertisements and news reports on the ballot proposals but are still unfamiliar with the issues at hand.

Help is on the way, I have enclosed the official language of these two statewide proposals as it will appear on the November 2nd ballot. I have also included the pros and cons of each proposal as argued by both those in favor and those against the proposals. My goal is to present the arguments clearly so you may carefully weigh the issues carefully.

Proposal 04-1:

A PROPOSAL TO AMEND THE STATE CONSTITUTION TO REQUIRE VOTER APPROVAL OF ANY FORM OF GAMBLING AUTHORIZED BY LAW AND CERTAIN NEW STATE LOTTERY GAMES

The proposed constitutional amendment would:

- Require voter approval of any form of gambling authorized by law after January 1, 2004.
- Require voter approval of any new state lottery games utilizing “table games” or “player operated mechanical or electronic devices” introduced after January 1, 2004.
- Provide that when voter approval is required, both statewide voter approval and voter approval in the city or township where gambling will take place must be obtained.
- Specify that the voter approval requirement does not apply to Indian tribal gaming or gambling in up to three casinos located in the City of Detroit.

Should this proposal be adopted?

YES_____ NO_____

Supporters of the proposal argue that this amendment is pro-voter and is not pro-gambling or anti-gambling. Some may contend that Michigan ranks third in the amount of gross gambling activity revenue in the country. Accordingly, voters should be given the option of whether to approve additional gaming activities, similar to the option they were given to approve State Lottery and the Detroit casinos.

Opponents argue that this proposal is backed by current casino operators (including the Detroit and Indian casinos) to protect their current gaming monopoly. They state that this proposal is an attempt to prevent the introduction of video lottery terminals at racetracks, which can be used to reinvigorate the state’s horse racing industry. Next, they contest that the proposal could hamper the Lottery’s effort to develop new games and to market existing ones, which would jeopardize future school funding as a result. Opponents point out that the state lottery provided about \$640 million in funding to K-12 schools last year.

Proposal 04-2:

A PROPOSAL TO AMEND THE STATE CONSTITUTION TO SPECIFY WHAT CAN BE RECOGNIZED AS A “MARRIAGE OR SIMILAR UNION” FOR ANY PURPOSE

- The proposal would amend the state constitution to provide that “the union of one man and one woman in marriage shall be the only agreement recognized as a marriage or similar union for any purpose.”

Should this proposal be adopted?

YES_____ NO_____

Supporters of the proposal argue that this constitutional amendment would provide for the protection of the sanctity of marriage thereby ensuring that marriage remains defined as the traditional union of one man and one woman. They contend that the proposal would prevent judges from voiding existing

Michigan law that bans gay marriages and would prevent the recognition of same-sex marriages from other states.

Opponents of the Proposal 2 maintain that the proposal would not only install a constitutional ban against allowing marriages for same-sex partners but could also block civil unions and potentially prevent state and local governments, as well as educational institutions, from granting same-sex partners the same benefits as married couples. They fear that the proposal's vague language could prevent employers from offering domestic partnership benefits (even if under a negotiated contract) to same-sex and opposite-sex unmarried couples. Lastly, they declare that Michigan statute already contains a provision against same-sex marriage and that the state constitution should not be used to restrict the rights of a segment of the population.

For a more in-depth look at the ballot proposals, I strongly recommend that you log on to the non-partisan Senate Fiscal Agency website for their excellent analysis. It can be found at <http://www.senate.michigan.gov/sfa/Main/BallotProposals.html>. The website features detailed historical background on the issue, potential fiscal implications of the proposals, as well as a detailed analysis of the arguments of both sides of the issues.

I hope that this information will help you weigh the pros and cons of each ballot proposal carefully. Your vote can make a difference in the future of Michigan public policy. Please take the opportunity to exercise the ultimate form of democracy on November 2nd. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Mickey's TV Insider Show

Check out my TV Insider Show coming to a television station near you. Watch me interview local guests about politics, life, issues and concerns to our district.

Sterling Heights

Every Saturday and Sunday at 12:30 p.m.
(Comcast Channel 5/WOW Channel 10)

Utica

Every Wednesday at 9 a.m.
(Comcast Channel 5/WOW Channel 10)

Clinton Township

Last week of every month- Sat thru Thurs
(Comcast Channel 5/WOW Channel 10)

Roseville

Every other Tuesday at 6:05 p.m.
(Comcast Channel 18)

*Please note that Sterling Heights/Utica/Clinton Township will show the TV Insider Show on Comcast Channel 5 and Wide Open West Channel 10. Clinton Township will air the TV Insider Show at various times during the last week of every month. Roseville can see the TV Insider Show on Comcast Channel 18.

Coffee Hours

*Please note that since the District Office is in Roseville, I do not have set coffee hours in Roseville. However, I encourage you to visit the Roseville office. We even have a coffee pot. Everyone is welcome to attend the coffee hours and discuss their issues and concerns.

**Oct. 25
7-9 p.m.**

Location: Clinton-Macomb Public Library
(40900 Romeo Plank Road, south of Canal)

**Nov. 1
7-9 P.M.**

Location: Sterling Heights Public Library
(40255 Dodge Park)

Contact My Office

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